



Strategic Directions 2000-2005 Progress Report for 2001 — Programs

**Legal Services Corporation
January 8, 2002**

MEMORANDUM

TO: LSC Board of Directors

FROM: Randi Youells, Vice President for Programs

DATE: January 8, 2002

SUBJECT: Strategic Directions 2000-2005

I am pleased to submit to you our report concerning the progress of the programs' units and offices—primarily OPP and the State Planning Team with some statistical and reporting assistance from OIM—in terms of meeting the goals and objectives of your strategic planning document, **Strategic Directions 2000-2005**.

I would like to put this report in its proper perspective. We are all acutely aware that our civil legal services delivery system is strained to the breaking point. Legal services programs nationally have been battered by economic pressures and escalating demand. Our grantees now estimate that they currently turn away four out of every five low-income individuals who are seeking critical legal assistance. Courts are witnessing an unprecedented increase in the number of people who enter the justice system today lacking legal representation and who are consequently forced to represent themselves in complex and complicated legal proceedings. Our communities are experiencing unrelenting pressures as unresolved civil legal problems result in homelessness, loss of self-sufficiency and growing crime rates. Despite the hard work and the advancements of the last thirty years, economic and social inequality coupled with racial and gender-based discrimination continues to be the central reality of our clients' lives. The fact that we are now seeing second and third generation low-income people walk through our doors and sit in our waiting rooms is a brutal reminder that the realization of justice for many Americans remains more an aspiration than a fact.

LSC and our grantees live and work in a world that is marked by continual challenges and crises. That is the bad news. The good news, however, can be found in reports like this one. Reports that demonstrate that there are many people both within LSC and our grantee programs and outside of our federally-funded structure who care deeply about issues related to equal justice and who have refused to take our many crises lying down. People like the staff at the

legal services programs in New Jersey, Maryland, Washington, Texas, Missouri, California, and Indiana who are actively and continuously engaged in reassessing their delivery practices and policies to meet emerging and unmet needs. People like those legal services heroes in Arkansas, Illinois, Florida and Alabama who have worked closely and in partnership with LSC to expand access to and enhance resources for legal services providers and their clients. People like my legal services friends in Iowa, Ohio, Virginia, Arizona and Kentucky who have devoted years of their lives to the legal services movement. People like yourselves who in this era of diminishing resources and escalating need have devoted time and energy to strengthening legal services and helping to make essential changes in that way we practice legal services so that we can ensure that the phrase "justice for all" is not relegated to a sexy slogan on a t-shirt or a banner.

This report demonstrates that our grantees and the broader equal justice community are doing great things for clients and are doing it more efficiently and effectively with fewer resources. But for me it demonstrates another very important point. It shows that a small group of committed individuals, the fourteen lawyers and five non-lawyers professionals working in OPP and on the State Planning Team (Michael Genz, Robert Gross, Anh Tu, Tim Watson, Cyndy Schneider, Reginald Haley, Melissa Pershing, Althea Hayward, Willie Abrams, John Eidleman, Barb Donnelly, Monica Holmen, Joyce Raby, Glenn Rawdon, Jennifer Bateman, Lou Castro, Lisa Thomas, Gloria Wood) and Pat Hanrahan and Wendy Burnette in the Executive Office (aided and abetted by John Meyer and his wonderful staff in OIM)—terrific, hard-working, experienced, conscientious individuals—are the heart and soul of LSC. Without them breathing life into your strategic plan, you would simply have a meaningless report that would be gathering dust on a shelf down in our Reprographics department.

I think this report shows that we have had an inordinately productive and successful year. But we didn't do it alone. We did it with the help of the Board and the other staff at LSC. We did it with the help and assistance of our grantees. We did it with the aid of consultants and other equal justice stakeholders. And we did it with the support of two terrific Presidents—John McKay and John Erlenborn—who evidenced their commitment and support for the program's initiatives in this document with their helpful advice, their useful feedback, their sometimes annoying challenges and criticisms, and ultimately their unswerving support for us, for our grantees and for the clients we are so privileged to serve.

Strategic Directions 2000-2005

Progress Report

Strategic Directions 2000 – 2005 challenges LSC staff to expand the support offered to LSC programs and to increase state planning guidance specifically to improve clients' opportunities to access a full range of high quality civil legal services. In response, staff has grown in size and capacity. The Office of Information Management (OIM), the Office of Program Performance (OPP), and the State Planning Team are now completely staffed. In 2001, OPP and the State Planning Team focused their hiring activities on recruiting individuals with expertise in critical areas like diversity, technology, and organizational development. Innovations in staff assignments and approaches have brought about more focused state planning efforts throughout the country and program support that emphasizes strengthening quality at individual organizations and within the state legal services delivery structure.

GOALS



Strategic Directions 2000-2005, adopted by the LSC Board of Directors January 28, 2000, establishes two strategic goals:

By 2004, LSC will dramatically increase the provision of legal services to eligible persons, which anticipates as outcomes:

- ◆ Increasing numbers of clients receiving appropriate services.
- ◆ Expanding relevancy of delivery systems to the most pressing needs, with clients taking a leading role.
- ◆ Increasing perception among low-income individuals that they have recourse if they require civil legal information, counseling, or representation.
- ◆ Increasing the public perception of the legal system as successful in providing equal justice.
- ◆ Expanding federal funding and other public and private resources for legal services.

By 2004, LSC will ensure that eligible clients are receiving appropriate and high quality legal assistance, which anticipates as outcomes:

- ◆ Expanding range, and improvement in the quality, of services provided by programs.

- ◆ Increasing consistency in the quality of legal services programs.
- ◆ Achieving significant beneficial results for clients as determined by outcome measurements.

STRATEGIES



In order to achieve these goals, LSC is utilizing integrated strategies based in three essential areas: 1) State Planning, 2) Technology, and 3) Program Oversight:

USE OF STATE PLANNING to integrate, coordinate, and increase resources available in every state and territory. Objectives include:

- ◆ Identifying the most important issues involving the delivery in all 50 states, territories and DC.
- ◆ Identifying the adequacy of existing capacities and existing funding to address issues of access and quality.
- ◆ Expanding legal capacity through coordination with other providers.
- ◆ Recommitment to the provision of services to Native Americans and migrant workers.
- ◆ Developing programmatic and financial capabilities to reach more clients with a wider range of services.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY to improve access and client service delivery. Objectives include:

- ◆ Expanding the number of clients receiving some level of appropriate legal advice and referral via technologically sophisticated intake advice and referral systems.
- ◆ Providing consistent, quality information and assistance to a greater number of persons through computerized and web-based self help programs.
- ◆ Supporting quality advocacy via video/teleconferencing, improved legal research and information gathering, improved supervision and expanded training opportunities through technology.
- ◆ Fostering new or expanded linkages with the providers, courts, pro bono attorneys, and others working to provide legal representation.

USE OF PROGRAM OVERSIGHT to ensure quality and accountability. Objectives include:

- ◆ Improving the grant management process to utilize the information received to provide standards-based feedback to programs.
- ◆ Undertaking regular visits to programs to ensure consistent program quality and compliance.
- ◆ Developing new information systems that provide more accurate and useful information about the work programs perform which can be used for both evaluation and grants management.
- ◆ Working with grantees in each state to develop systems and procedures to ensure that legal services program staff receive appropriate training and that the work in each state is performed in a coordinated manner.
- ◆ Working with grantees and planners in each state to promote leadership training, including local board training, and to promote client board member participation and training (outreach to client leaders).

LSC COMMITMENTS ACHIEVED IN 2001



USE OF STATE PLANNING

Commitment: Broad agreement by the civil justice community, including the courts and IOLTA programs, on the values, purposes, and objectives of the State Planning Initiative.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ In March of 2001, LSC released *Building State Justice Communities: a State Planning Report from the Legal Services Corporation*. This publication examined state planning in 18 states as models for building various components of a client-centered, comprehensive, integrated state justice community.
- ◆ In April, LSC announced significant changes in service areas of 14 states.
- ◆ A Special Report to Congress on State Planning and Reconfiguration was released late in the year, along with the LSC Board Taskforce Report on Configuration, adopted by the LSC Board of Directors in November.

In a number of states, additional resources are now available for civil legal assistance:

- ◆ Successful efforts by the Tennessee Alliance of Legal Services (the state planning entity) to have bail bond fee legislation passed will result in an additional \$2.5 million in state funds for legal service programs. In western Tennessee, a collaboration by two programs will bring over a million dollars in US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) fair housing grants to Tennessee.
- ◆ The Illinois Equal Justice Commission (Illinois state planning body) has begun a campaign to secure additional Illinois General Assembly funding for legal services. A two-year effort for more state funding raised \$70,000 to hire a public relations firm to coordinate the campaign. An additional \$90,000 is expected over the next two months from corporate donors and foundations.
- ◆ The three LSC-funded programs in Alabama have hired a statewide Director of Development, an experienced fundraiser who previously worked with the Red Cross and the Girl Scouts. The major challenge is the Alabama Campaign for Legal Services, where a consultant retained by the three programs did initial preparation. These early efforts were funded by a special grant from the American Bar Association Litigation Section (\$10,000) and matching LSC technical assistance funds (\$5,000) augmented by a \$5,000 contribution made on a pro rata basis by the three programs. LSC currently provides over 90% of the funding for legal services in Alabama, and realization of the need for diverse funding is prompting the state justice community to create a development office that will seek diverse funding for legal services in Alabama. In the first year of the campaign over \$50,000 was raised, almost entirely from the legal community.
- ◆ The South Dakota State Bar has agreed to house the new Access to Justice Coordinator position funded by IOLTA. Access to justice is of paramount importance for this year's Bar president. South Dakota's LSC programs have jointly applied for US Department of Justice Violence Against Women Act funds. This is the first time they have collaborated on a funding application that will benefit the entire state.
- ◆ Florida undertook a successful effort to persuade the Florida Supreme Court to amend the IOTA rule. The amended rule will result in banks paying higher interest rates on IOTA accounts, which could yield an additional \$15 million dollars in IOTA revenues. The President of the Florida Bar is leading a Florida Justice Community campaign to obtain a minimum of \$10 million dollars a year from the Florida Legislature. At present, the Florida Legislature does not fund civil legal services for the poor.

Commitment: Internal capacity and expertise to support meaningful planning and plan implementation consistent with the values, purposes, and objectives of the State Planning Initiative.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ With the hiring of three fulltime program counsel or analysts in the last six months, the state planning team is now fully staffed (in terms of the 2001 budget). All state planning team members have significant field program and legal services leadership experience. Among the five-fulltime state planning team members (Barbara Donnelly, Robert Gross, Althea Hayward, Melissa Pershing and Timothy Watson) and two part-time consultants (Chuck Cook and Joseph Dailing) there is a total of 260 years of field program experience.¹
- ◆ State planning-related program visits took place in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, and South Dakota.
- ◆ LSC executive and state planning staff were present and participated in community stakeholder meetings or statewide conferences in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia and Washington state. Staff also attended meetings of the Midwest Project Directors Association and Southeast Project Directors Association during the course of the year.
- ◆ Technical Assistance funds were given to assist merging programs in Arkansas, Iowa, North Dakota, and Pennsylvania.

National initiatives undertaken or completed in 2001 include:

- ◆ “Making Mergers Work” workshop at the national NLADA/ABA Equal Justice Conference in March.
- ◆ Diversity in the Legal Services Community conversations took place throughout 2001 involving groups of program directors, staff, clients, and board members from throughout the legal services community.

¹ Now that each unit is fully staffed, the LSC Office of Program Performance and its state planning team contain over 260 years of experience in LSC-funded programs. Many staff also have experience in other nonprofit organizations that work as partners with our grantees, such as bar associations, non-LSC funded legal services providers and social welfare advocacy groups. In all, there are 14 lawyers on OPP and state planning staff. Their efforts are enhanced by five other individuals who are not attorneys and two permanent part-time consultants. Their combined expertise includes resource development, organizational management, technology, migrant and immigration law, access and intake systems. Prior to coming to LSC, six staff were executive directors at their legal services programs and three were managing attorneys. Two staff from the LSC Executive Office assist OPP and the state planning team members on a regular basis, and add almost forty years of experience in LSC-funded programs to the rich mix of talents.

- ◆ LSC has scheduled a meeting with its statewide grantees for February 7-9, 2002. This meeting initially was scheduled for September 13-15, 2001.
- ◆ Client-Centered Conference, April 25-28 in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Fifty-one conferees included 22 clients, 18 legal services staff, and 11 others including judges and IOLTA staff and 16 organizational representatives from LSC, NLADA, and CLASP. Participants authored twenty papers that were distributed at the conference.
- ◆ Client Board Member Training at the 2001 NLADA Annual Conference.

Commitment: LSC's grant making and regulatory authority promotes expanded, effective, and efficient state and local legal services to low income persons.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ Grantees in 11 states received the maximum grant term of three years. Arizona, Arkansas, California, Illinois, Kentucky, New Mexico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia received three-year terms as an acknowledgement of their "significant progress toward the development of comprehensive, integrated delivery systems."
- ◆ Grantees in 10 states received two-year grant terms (2002 and 2003) for demonstrating significant progress, though still needing additional state planning. Those states are Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Montana, New York (except for Legal Services of New York City which will receive a three-year grant), North Carolina, and Oklahoma.
- ◆ Programs in Michigan and the District of Columbia received one-year grant terms for 2002. LSC is in the process of a one-year review of its prior reconfiguration decision in Michigan.
- ◆ Grant conditions, riders, or reporting requirements are being added to a number of grant awards to ensure continued broad-based, inclusive state planning.
- ◆ Program Letter 2000-7 was sent to the field at the end of 2000 calling on each state to evaluate and report on their state planning progress. Reports began arriving late this year and are being reviewed; LSC responses will be sent in early 2002.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Commitment: Statewide technology plans required as part of the State Planning Initiative.

2001 Achievements

In 2001, LSC continued to play an active role in encouraging and supporting states' technology plans.

- ◆ LSC assisted several states by participating in planning groups and providing training on technology at statewide trainings. Some of the states were Oklahoma, Virginia, Arkansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Mississippi, and West Virginia.
- ◆ Technology grants assisted implementation of state plans. Three grants in Texas helped with merger issues through integration of disparate systems. Grants made to Arkansas and Virginia aided in coordination of case management systems and building systems for statewide client intake.
- ◆ Twenty-eight grants targeted statewide web sites, which encompass not only all of the LSC programs in a state, but other state justice community partners.
- ◆ Five national technology grants were made to assist states with the implementation of other technology grants and technology planning. (These national grants are described in detail below.) Among them were:
 - A grant to support for implementation and content management of statewide web sites.
 - A grant to link technical expertise from other programs to technology grantees at no cost to grantees.
 - A grant to create a web site to provide information on technology for all LSC programs.

Commitment: Technology and Pro Se initiative grants to be awarded by LSC.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ Ninety-five Technology Initiative Grant (TIG) requests were received from 46 states and territories for a total of \$19.2 million. Fifty-five grants were awarded, with \$7 million allotted for TIG 2001. Twenty-eight states received grants for statewide websites, 13 for technology projects being undertaken on a statewide basis (including three for statewide intake systems). Five grants with a national scope were awarded (see below).

- ◆ A TIG conference was held in Chicago in October to introduce this year's grantees to the national support system that LSC has developed, with the assistance of numerous grantees. These five national support grants will give our grantees more resources than they have ever had available to them for developing *pro se* tools for clients. The first two, LSTech and LegalMeetings, will be available to all LSC grantees, not just TIG recipients.
- ◆ In the first national system, Legal Services of Southern Michigan is creating a national web site (www.lstech.org) with resources on legal services technology. They will be working closely with NTAP so that grantees with questions can log onto the web site and request assistance from NTAP. Other partners on this grant are the University of Michigan, providing servers, and NLADA, providing content and technical assistance.
- ◆ The next grant is for a national legal services virtual conferencing center to be coordinated by Gulf Coast Legal Services in Houston. Using WebEx hosting services, our grantees will be able to meet electronically via the web. Grantees can convene technology trainings, state planning sessions, and advocates meetings. The site that will facilitate this project is www.legalmeetings.org.
- ◆ A third national system grant, earmarked for the Legal Aid Society of Cincinnati, will help grantees with project evaluations. Our grantee, working with the Management Information Exchange and experts on evaluations will create a national evaluation strategy to ensure that our grants improve access for clients to the fullest extent possible.
- ◆ Building on work undertaken by last year's grantees, LSC has approved grants to create 29 new statewide web sites. The majority will be housed on *Pro Bono Net* using their LawHelp template. To assist programs with implementing these web sites, the Northwest Justice Project and ProBonoNet in New York are hiring two full-time "circuit riders" to assist grantees with content management and to ensure that each web site supports the entire state justice community.
- ◆ The National Technology Assistance Project (NTAP) coordinated by the Legal Aid Society of Orange County will help grantees with management or technology issues arising from their grants.
- ◆ In addition, presentations on TIG funding availability and the application process took place at the National Equal Justice Conference, the Southeastern Project Directors Association meeting, the Indiana Access to Justice Conference and Virginia's technology planning meeting.

Commitment: Working with grantees, LSC has developed and disseminated replicable models for the effective and efficient use of technology.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ With TIG 2000, grants were made for two statewide web site templates. The theory behind these templates was to create a structure that could be replicated by other states with all of the functionality, but at a fraction of the cost. In TIG 2001, these templates will be used in 28 states. The cost to implement the technology portion is only 20% of the each grant (\$10,000). The remainder will be used to coordinate content. This is a good example of how LSC's coordinating efforts can result in large savings to our programs from replication.
- ◆ Another tool being used for replication is the national grant for the technology web site (LSTech, described above). On this site, any program can find details on all of the technology grants and avoid the expense and effort of creating new projects for their states. There will be technical information on satellite Internet access, video systems, telephone, and a host of other subjects.
- ◆ LSC co-sponsored a case management system conference in conjunction with the Equal Justice Conference and participated in a session on how to help advocates and staff use the technology tools they already have.
- ◆ Staff regularly confer with National Center for State Courts, State Justice Institute, the Open Society Institute and Justice Management Institute to facilitate pro se efforts, specifically encouraging partnerships among our programs, the state courts, bar associations and community organizations. Meetings are also conducted with the National Access to Justice Funders Group (LSC, Open Society, State Justice Institute, National Center for State Courts and the Horowitz Foundation) on building broader justice communities, statewide web sites, follow-up to the Pro Se Collaboration Conference, technology support systems and multi-lingual access.
- ◆ In addition to the national grants and the statewide web site grants, statewide grants were made to Virginia, Arkansas, and Nebraska to improve their intake and delivery systems. Virginia and Arkansas will be implementing single point of entry for all clients into the intake system, even though each program will be doing its own intake. Their case management systems will be running on an applications service provider (ASP). This means that no software will be needed to access their system, opening up the ability to do intake from any computer with Internet access. This will help them expand intake, such as allowing pro bono attorneys to do intake from their offices.
- ◆ Through our planning efforts, LSC is seeing many mergers of programs. To help with these mergers, LSC made several technology grants to help programs combine multiple information systems into one integrated system. Examples of these are the three grants to each of the new programs in Texas.

- ◆ As well as making new grants, staff continue to monitor the TIG projects from last year. The Minnesota and Ohio grants to develop web templates are being used as models for this year's statewide web site grants. The Orange County I-CAN project was successfully completed and is being expanded with additional monies this year. This project, working with the Courts, district attorney's office, and libraries, placed self-help kiosks in several locations in Orange County. The project has been so helpful to clients and the courts that the Court system is examining the project to see if it should be implement statewide. Hawaii's video project is completed and operational. This project is used to connect offices in the other islands to the main LASH office in Honolulu. This allows them to do follow-ups on their pro se clinics to insure they continue with the high success rates. LSC is sharing what has been learned about the project with other interested programs. DNA's satellites are providing high speed Internet access to all of their offices. Before, many offices had to dial long distance numbers to connect at very slow speeds. They are installing their pro se kiosks and designing the web site that will allow persons throughout their service area to obtain self-help information in their native tongues.

Commitment: State Technology Planning Manual developed and disseminated.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ The purpose of the Technology Planning Manual is to provide executive directors, technologists and/or technology managers with a step-by-step guide to successfully creating a statewide technology plan. The Manual will identify the main issues involved in planning successfully for technology and will capture information on planning, technology standards, legal services issues, and partner communities.

The proposed Table of Contents is as follows:

- (1) Introduction (purpose of the manual, how to use it, overview)
- (2) Process of Planning (staffing the group, identifying constituencies, timeline, funding the effort)
- (3) Components of a Written Work Plan (state technology support structure, standards in key technology areas, i.e. LAN/WAN, hardware, software, connectivity, email, training, video conferencing, etc.)
- (4) Implementation of the Work Plan (status tracking, training, evaluations, periodic reports, staffing on-going support, funding statewide efforts)
- (5) Funding (success stories, budgets, partnerships)
- (6) Other Resources for Help (website links to other resources and individuals)

- ◆ Using the national NTAP grant (see above) LSC is gathering information from experts within the legal services community to prepare this manual. We believe disseminating the broad experience of this group of experts will be useful for state planners and technology managers. There was a planning meeting to discuss the preparation of this manual at the TIG 2001 conference in Chicago and soon we will have a timetable for its completion.

Use of Program Oversight

Commitment: Develop methods to assess program quality, to ensure that case handling staff are well trained and that the legal work among programs is coordinated and of high quality.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ LSC uses three primary tools to assure quality in the programs that it represents:
 - The competition process;
 - Quality review visits; and
 - Provision of support and technical assistance to its recipients.
- ◆ In 2001 the Corporation again used the competition process to review programs assure quality. LSC's competition criteria have been refined to ensure that LSC recipients respond and adhere to performance standards that result in effective legal services for low-income people. An extensive guide has been developed for evaluations that considers each criterion and provides reviewers with standards against which to judge funding applications.
- ◆ In 2001, LSC created a protocol for on-site programs reviews, published as a "Program Review Guide." It is a reference tool for staff and consultants in reviewing programs and to draft reports and recommendations based on the reviews. Program reviews are one way to monitor program development, solve problems, and establish new strategies for expanding access and enhancing quality. Among other resources, the Guide contains a sample letter introducing the program to the review process, a comprehensive list of items to request prior to a visit; a simplified work form to capture information while on site; a model work plan, a form to help determine the quality of the legal work and suggestions for conducting personal interviews. The implementation of the program review process is discussed in the next section.
- ◆ LSC engages in other efforts to increase quality. LSC personnel are frequently asked by grantees for assistance with various aspects of running a successful program. LSC can be a link between the person making the request and other

programs that have addressed the same concern. In 2001, LSC began to systematize this effort by creating the **Information Management Project**. The project's purpose is to obtain and publicize information on model practices, programs, and systems. A staff member is engaged full-time in launching this effort.

Other activities that support increasing program quality undertaken in 2001 are:

- ◆ Producing Draft Characteristics on Intake, Advice, and Referral System. LSC developed and distributed the document to the public for comment; it will be final early in 2002.
- ◆ Contracting with the National Center of Poverty Law (NCPL) to provide training on legal research for poverty law practice to legal services attorneys in ten states selected by LSC, and to write and distribute a desktop research manual on poverty law.

Commitment: Undertake a series of program evaluation performance pilot projects that are intended to provide in-depth understanding of unique issues facing each program, more relevant and accurate reporting of program activities and resource utilization, performance measures that describe and project program success, information that will lead to an improvement of the overall effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ The Office of Program Performance conducted twelve on-site program reviews in 2001. Under review were programs in Florida, Alabama, Arkansas, New Jersey, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Massachusetts, and Ohio. OPP also organized a peer review of the Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program. These reviews allowed us to monitor program development, to learn about problems and to suggest new strategies for expanding access and enhancing quality.

Commitment: Design a new management information system to obtain more complete and accurate information about the quality and level of work performed by each grantee and about outcomes achieved for clients.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ In 2001, LSC devised a method to measure other significant responsibilities that programs undertake to help clients, in addition to handling client cases. These “matters” consist of activities such as pro se work, community legal education, and analyzing client problems for referral to other resources. Programs have been counting “matters” since July 1, 2001. LSC’s first report on this activity is due in March of 2002.

- ◆ The 2001 Grant Activity Report (GAR) cycle, including Case Service Reports (CSR's) and the allied Self-Inspection process, has been successfully completed.
- ◆ The results of the Self-Inspection show a great improvement in the accuracy of CSR submissions, with the error rate reduced 55%, from an 11% error rate for 1999 CSR's to a 5% error rate for 2000 CSR's. With this reduction in error rate, the CSR's now meet the standard of "substantial accuracy" which was the objective when LSC initiated the Self-Inspection process in 1998.
- ◆ The total cases reported to LSC for 2000 are 1,012,368. While this total is nominally a slight reduction from the 1,038,714 reported for 1999, it is actually an increase because LSC had to adjust the 1999 total downward to 924,000 cases to take account of the high error rate. With the great improvement in the accuracy for 2000, LSC can return to using the reported figures without any adjustment.

Commitment: Performance standards will include criteria for ensuring that grantees have effective administrative systems in place and that clients receive quality assistance. LSC will provide regular feedback to programs and applicants on the quality of their applications.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ LSC has developed performance guidelines for assessing grant applications. These guidelines, embodied in the LSC Competition Evaluation Guide, cover all aspects of program performance including components of the delivery approach, management, legal work supervision, identifying and establishing the most critical legal needs, coordination within the delivery system, and experience and reputation. They track, and are built on the LSC Performance Criteria and ABA Standards for Providers of Civil Legal Services to the Poor. In Spring 2002, LSC will publish these guidelines. Following the competition for 2003, LSC intends to inform each applicant about how well their program met each criterion.

Commitment: Review the competitive grant making process, the performance standards applicable to LSC grantees, and LSC's statutory and regulatory compliance requirements for efficiency, unnecessary duplication and implications for the delivery of high quality, appropriate legal services.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ Additions to the 2002 Request for Proposal (RFP) include questions for applicants on staff diversity, recruitment and retention strategies and training, and the organization's strategic planning. RFP inquiries on technology and on state planning were streamlined. Some modifications resulted in more comprehensive information on applicants' proposed subgrantee relationships. LSC staff conducted

telephonic Applicant Information Sessions or discussions on the application process with interested grantees and experts. Another comprehensive review of the competition process is scheduled for the beginning of 2002.

Commitment: LSC will seek additional funds to increase the presence of LSC staff in the field.

2001 Achievements

- ◆ With the hiring of new state planning team members as well as the additions of Matilde Lacayo and Monica Holman to OPP Main and Joyce Raby in Technology, there is now an OPP Main team member and a state planning team member assigned to every state and territory. Staff are also able to assume special initiatives and projects and to participate in national, regional and statewide meetings and conferences.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM OUTCOMES ACHIEVED IN 2001



The Development of a State Planning Evaluation Instrument

An RFP was created, proposals reviewed and a consultant hired in 2001 to design a state justice community outcomes measurement tool. Soon LSC will be in a position to quantitatively evaluate the impact of state planning; for now we will demonstrate that state planning activities have caused beneficial outcomes for state justice communities, outcomes that position programs to achieve:

- ◆ Increased number of clients receiving appropriate legal services.
- ◆ Expanded relevancy of the delivery system to the most pressing needs of low-income clients Increased perception among low-income individuals that they have recourse if they require civil legal information, counseling or representation.
- ◆ Increased public perception of the legal justice system as successful in providing Equal Justice.
- ◆ Expansion of federal funding and other public and private resources dedicated to meeting civil legal needs of eligible low-income clients.
- ◆ Expanded range and improved quality of services provided by legal services programs.
- ◆ Greater consistency in the quality of legal services programs.

- ◆ Significant beneficial results for low income clients, as determined by outcome measurements.

The Creation of Efforts to Link with the International Justice Community

- ◆ LSC has moved into a leadership position in the international legal aid community. In June 2001 and again in December 2001, LSC Vice President for Programs Randi Youells participated in conferences that brought together leaders and visionaries from the legal services community in common law countries (Australia, England, New Zealand, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Canada and the United States along with Germany and the Netherlands) and Southeast Asian countries to discuss emerging legal issues, government and alternative funding sources, access, technology and other urgent concerns facing providers of legal services to poor clients around the world.
- ◆ Addressing the Pan Pacific Legal Aid Conference participants, Randi Youells observed that now, largely as a result of strategic planning, “LSC has more efficient programs, new partnerships with unlikely stakeholders, powerful new funding sources, strong allies among the judiciary and the private bar, and state and local governments have become more sensitive to the needs of low income clients.”
- ◆ In Australia, in remarks titled *Why Legal Services Has to Change*, Youells said, “over the last several years, the legal services community in the United States has pursued a fundamental review of our delivery system—the most far-reaching and challenging we have ever undertaken. The objective has been to create coordinated and integrated equal justice communities, which live up to the values and ideals which legal services programs were initially created to protect, but which also make sense in this new and ever-changing environment.”

LSC's Diversity Initiative

- ◆ In conjunction with the National Legal Aid and Defender Association (NLADA), LSC launched a series of conversations on diversity in 2001. Over the year, eight separate conversations on broad issues of diversity including disability, age, gender, race, sexual orientation and ethnicity took place. Several were three or four hour discussions with small groups of staff attorneys, directors, or clients. There was also a two-day national conference on diversity in the legal services community, a first for LSC and NLADA. Fifty leaders from around the country participated. Reports on each event will be the foundation for an action agenda for LSC and the legal services community.
- ◆ Suggestions and observations raised by client and staff participants at the eight diversity events intensified LSC's focus on diversity. Applicants for LSC funds

must now describe efforts underway to cultivate new leadership in their program and in the state justice community, including how they ensure that leadership is diverse. State justice community self-evaluations include a series of inquiries on the diversity work advanced by a state's plan and related activities. Moreover, LSC has hired a state planning staff person whose area of expertise and emphasis is diversity. She will assist state justice communities with this critical initiative.

- ◆ LSC Vice President for Programs Randi Youells repeatedly emphasized diversity and inclusion in her speeches to the legal services community. Keynote addresses for the Maryland Legal Aid Bureau staff retreat and the annual state planning meeting in South Carolina provided opportunities to highlight LSC's support for multi-cultural competence in program staff along with expanded outreach to marginalized client communities.
- ◆ LSC retained a consultant to review staff data submitted annually by grantees, and report on the diversity trends the statistics show. While executive directors of color or who are women in our programs has not diminished in spite of a decreasing number of programs (from reconfiguration) the number of women leaders and leaders of color is small compared with their numbers in our pool of attorneys and other professional staff. The results of these data will further inform the action agenda, noted above.

Increased Quality and Services through State and Region Collaborations

- ◆ In several states and regions, collaborations around client issues have resulted in the expansion of services to clients. A benefit of Tennessee's fair housing efforts (noted earlier) is that LSC-funded programs in Mississippi, in collaboration with West Tennessee Legal Services, will receive a three-year HUD grant of \$350,000 to develop and administer a fair housing initiative in Mississippi. Initially, West Tennessee Legal Services, a program that has many years of experience in running HUD projects, will oversee the grant. Gradually administration will be transferred to South Mississippi Legal Services, which will hire a Project Coordinator. Together, the three other Mississippi LSC programs will receive \$99,000 to implement the initiative in their service areas under the guidance of the Project Coordinator.
- ◆ New Jersey continued its comprehensive efforts to ensure that each legal services program in New Jersey was integrated with the others such that all providers had a "critical mass" of attorneys on staff, allowing for specialization. Further, their efforts allowed all attorneys in all of the providers to understand their role as part of a statewide delivery system.
- ◆ Missouri created the Missouri Legal Services Commission to, among other tasks, ensure that all of the Missouri delivery system components work together.

- ◆ Massachusetts' providers have formed the Advocacy Coordinating Group (ACG) with the participation of all LSC and non-LSC programs, combining expertise across practice areas to address broader issues such as access to employment, quality of education and barriers to service. The ACG identifies gaps in services around the state relating to these issue areas along with making recommendation about how best to address those gaps.
- ◆ In Illinois, LSC and non-LSC legal services programs are collaborating with Chicago Kent College of Law to establish the Illinois Center for Law and Technology (Tech Center). The Tech Center will offer training, information, and other support to legal services attorneys, paralegals, pro bono attorneys and clients. The Lawyers Trust Fund of Illinois and the Chicago Bar Foundation funded the first year of operation. LSC/TIG funds will support the second year of operation, allowing the Tech Center to develop and expand resources to include video streaming training, legal research, community legal education materials and other supportive services. The Tech Center is governed by a board of directors composed of representatives of the collaborative partners, and is currently housed at Chicago Kent College of Law.
- ◆ In 2001, California held its largest meeting of legal services staff and stakeholders since 1982. During this year also, California's Access to Justice Commission, Legal Aid Association and the LSC-funded program directors agreed to focus on delivery of legal services in rural areas, including the reallocation of resources.

Adoption of Uniform "Core Priorities"

- ◆ In 2001, California followed the lead of other states (New Jersey, North Carolina, Florida, and Washington state) and adopted uniform "core priorities" for all programs to assure consistency of service throughout the state. In California, there are 102 legal services programs funded by the state's Legal Services Trust Fund Program (IOLTA), including 78 field programs and 24 support programs serving an eligible population of almost five million poor people, speaking 224 languages. Of the field programs, eleven are LSC-funded. California's planning and collaborative efforts in the last year have been numerous and complex, reflecting the state's many programs, languages, clients and needs. The Legal Aid Association of California (LAAC) is a membership organization of legal services programs staffed by the Public Interest Clearinghouse. It is the entity in California responsible for state planning, and has already adopted core principles for a comprehensive integrated system for the provision of legal services in the following topical areas:
 - Meaningful Access to Justice
 - Client-centered planning
 - Stable and adequate resources
 - Continuum of services
 - Innovative and responsive delivery system

- Program Evaluation
- Coordination of regional and state planning
- Special needs communities
- Expansive partnerships to increase resources
- Cultivating leaders of tomorrow

Collaboration of Legal Services Programs and the Courts

In many states, legal services programs and the courts are working closely together to expand access to the judicial system.

- ◆ North Carolina and Arkansas held their first Equal Justice Conferences. Members of the judiciary were critical in the design of the curriculum and as panelists.
- ◆ In March, Massachusetts held an extremely well attended statewide pro se conference. The state justice community and the courts are now developing the goals and strategies that resulted from that event.
- ◆ Nevada Legal Services has led the development of pro se clinics in the state. In conjunction with Legal Services of Clark County, a non-LSC program, and the Clark County judicial system, NLS has established a Family Law Self-Help Center, located in the Clark County Courthouse across from the clerk's office. NLS employees staff the center, supervised by a county employee, who is a lawyer. In the near future, the center wants its forms on line so that clients can provide the information and forms will be generated automatically. The center also offers educational seminars to potential self-help clients. A similar center has been established in Washoe County (Reno). A housing self-help center has been established in Las Vegas. It is staffed by NLS employees as well. More recently, NLS staff has joined with the Nevada Supreme Court and others to draft a uniform set of pleadings that can be used in family court throughout Nevada. Currently Nevada has no uniform set of forms, and local variations often pose barriers for pro se clients.
- ◆ The Supreme Court of Washington created a new Task Force on Civil Equal Justice Funding.
- ◆ To enhance our programs' work in these areas, LSC Vice President Randi Youells spoke before the Conference of Chief Judges/Conference of State Court Administrators Taskforce on Pro Se Litigation. In her remarks she urged the judges and court administrators to (1) initiate efforts with local and state bar associations to overcome resistance to pro se activities and self-represented litigants; (2) study self-represented litigants to determine how many of them would have hired (and could have afforded) a private attorney at the time that they were denied services by a legal services program; and (3) promote acceptance of the practice of "unbundling" legal services.